

MARYLAND TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION  
Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

The following meeting occurred on Tuesday, July 18, 2017, commencing at 1:02 p.m. at the Maryland Transit Administration, 6 St. Paul Street, Baltimore, MD 21201

Liam Davis	CAC Chairman
John Mack	CAC Secretary
Tarah Ranke	CAC Member
Barry Linkner	Attendee
Edward K. Cohen	CACAT Member
Tom Hewitt	MTA Representative
Jim Knighton	Attendee
Jacquetta Hager	MTA Representative
Thomas Curtis	Attendee
Nancy Huggins	Attendee
Peggy Ann Clark	CACAT Member
Jill Kesler	CAC Member
Linda Greene	CAC Member
Nashawna Jessup	Attendee
Min. Glenn Smith	Attendee
Rabbi S.F. Levitt	Attendee
Avery Harmon	Attendee
Charles McManus	Attendee
Danielle Sweeney	Attendee
Jed Weeks	CAC Member
Tarah Ranke	CAC Member
Susan Sperry	CAC Member
Marlene Hendler	CACAT Member
Fr. Michael Bishop	Attendee
Diedre Ferron	CAC Member
Ron Skotz	CAC Member
Roderick Jenifer	CAC Member
"Fremont" Bernard Sturtevant	CAC Member
Judy Bellamy	MTA CAC Facilitator
Angela Jenkins	MTA Co-CAC Facilitator
Joan Ward	RCI Meeting Support

Absent:

Jed Weeks	CAC Member
Ally Merson	CAC Member

## AGENDA

- I. Meeting Called to Order
- II. Welcome and Introductions
- III. BaltimoreLink Update  
Tom Hewitt, Director, Service Development
- IV. Office of Local Transit Support Update  
Nancy Huggins, Analyst, Office of Local Transit Support
- V. Subcommittee Reports
  - Mobility
  - Legislative Affairs and Customer Service
  - Infrastructure and Planning
  - Title VI and Safety
- VI. Old Business  
New Business
- VII. Public Forum Questions
- VIII. Meeting Adjourns

## PROCEEDINGS

The meeting was called to order at 1:02 p.m.

Chair Liam Davis welcomed the members and guests. Facilitator Judy Bellamy said, "She was glad to be back on board and introduced her new co-facilitator, Angela Jenkins." She reported that Jed Weeks and Ally Amerson had emailed her to let the group know they would be unavailable for this meeting. Chair Davis reminded all Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) members to please give Judy heads-up, in advance, if unable to attend these meetings. Finally, there were some corrections needed to the June meeting notes, concerning Nancy Huggins resignation from the CAC to work for a contractor for the MTA and Diedre Ferron becoming the Co-Chair of the Infrastructure and Planning subcommittee, not the BaltimoreLink group.

### **Elections**

Chair Davis said, "Susan Sperry expressed interest in the Vice-Chair position for the CAC and asked whether any others wanted to put their name in the hat." There was some discussion on whether all members were notified of this opening. Davis said, "We discussed it at the last meeting, time is a factor, and that is one reason attendance is important." Linda Greene moved, Ron Skotz seconded the motion, and the group approved Sperry to be the new Vice-Chair of the CAC.

### **BaltimoreLink Update**

Director of Service Development Tom Hewitt provided an update, noting it has been one month since BaltimoreLink started. He reported that the rollout went fairly smoothly from an operational standpoint. He said, "MTA has regular service changes three times a year, and it was helpful to start BaltimoreLink during the summer service change." This allowed riders to become accustomed to the changes before the school year starts. His office is continually making service modifications, as they monitor the system, in preparation for the school service change in Fall 2017. He gives a lot of credit to the operators, who have been so responsive to the changes and the customers.

During the past 18 months, his office has received 4,000 comments – with over 1,000 in the past month alone. They are reviewing and responding to them while still going out to community meetings, with some asking for a meeting as soon as possible.

CAC discussion included questions about the number of stops and adding some stops back into the system, so they are not too far apart. Hewitt said, "They are looking at the data carefully in order to allocate resources. Since each stop takes at least 15 seconds, they don't want to stop too frequently." He said, "They have initiated unscheduled trippers to lighten the load during identified crush load periods." There were concerns that someone seeing a full bus go by would not know another one is coming. He understands and said, "They do a blast on social media when that occurs to get the message out." A small victory during this period is that service cuts were virtually nonexistent.

There was further discussion about whether MTA is looking at the local buses vs BaltimoreLink. Hewitt said, "It is a daunting task, to properly space the buses to provide headway management and avoid bus bunching." There is a 55/45 split between local buses and BaltimoreLink buses and they are carefully reviewing them to balance the systems.

Linda Greene asked when data analytics will be available to review. Hewitt said, “He will be reviewing data with the Administrator and may have initial analytics sometime in August.” The more time they have to collect the data, the better the data. Ed Cohen said, “The window is closing rapidly on routing suggestions that would need a public hearing, so Infrastructure and Planning and BaltimoreLink subcommittees need to meet ASAP to consider no-cost changes to the system.”

Finally, Hewitt asked everyone to let his office and their elected officials hear about the stops that they want, since there are conflicts. He needs to balance the competing needs. For example, on the 25<sup>th</sup> St. corridor, he wanted to locate 3 stops where some people don’t want them due to local loading zones, restaurants, etc. He said, “This is just the beginning, and they will be continuing to tweak the system based on feedback and any safety issues.”

### **Office of Local Transit Support**

Analyst Nancy Huggins briefed the group on the work of the Office of Local Transit Support. She advised that the office works with 23 local transit systems around the state of Maryland that are funded by the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA). She spent several of her first days working on BaltimoreLink, and it was “eye-opening”. Huggins was assisting riders on the Orange line and received many comments on the need for more buses.

She gave an overview of the variety of work done by the 13 talented staff in this office, including coordination with 23 local transit offices, 70 non-profits, and 10 rideshare offices. Oversight and coordination also includes the Bay Runner, a portion of Greyhound buses, and rideshare, carpool, van pool, biking, safety, Title VI review, annual budgets, grant programs, etc.

There were questions about the Office’s total budget and how the local transit routes are determined, including how much funding comes from each of the Counties vs the State of Maryland. There was also a request for the new folding maps to include all local routes on it, as well as BaltimoreLink routes. Judy Bellamy and Huggins agreed to follow up to provide answers to those questions.

### **Subcommittee Reports & Discussion**

Davis said, “He secured a space for the Title VI and Safety subcommittee to meet on the second Friday of every month, and suggested that other subcommittees set up regular location/dates to save coordinating time.” He knows that due to summer schedules and travel some groups have not yet been able to meet.

Ron Skotz discussed Legislative Affairs and highlighted an issue that has reached the Secretary level, involving millions of dollars, and may be a battle at the legislature. The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) is proposing to rescind all their contracts for transit – affecting hundreds of thousands of people depending on it. Basically, this would be handing over responsibility, but not funding to the MTA. Davis said, “We all need to be aware of austerity measures on the federal level that could impact State and local governments.”

Diedre Ferron said, “The Infrastructure and Planning subcommittee have not met yet, but she did start to survey members on their priorities.” Items include long-range planning, ways the system can respond to changes in land use, interconnectivity, metrics and capacity of system,

recycling possibilities, outreach and liaison with partners, a Tiger grant for North Avenue, etc. She would like contact information of Michael Gerlach (Chair of Mobility subcommittee) to set up a joint meeting. Judy Bellamy asked to have the survey information sent to her and she will have the contact information of CAC and CACAT members provided to all.

Davis provided a copy of the Title VI & Safety subcommittee meeting notes from July 14<sup>th</sup>. Their meeting included an overview and history of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and discrimination prohibited by it. They also developed bullets on what their focus should be in the next year, including finalizing a compliance methodology; review of BaltimoreLink routes/stops; and re-examining the State's decision to go forward on the Purple Line vs the Red Line. He said, "He knows these are not cheap topics, but it is their responsibility." Members reiterated their request for a bigger map of the BaltimoreLink system. Davis also said, "Marlene Hendler volunteered to Chair and he will be happy to Co-chair this subcommittee."

In response to discussion about which subcommittee should lead on the routing issues and when MTA needs to know subcommittees' recommendations, Hewitt said, "Budget issues should be submitted by September and non-budget issues no later than December."

## **Comments**

Davis said, "the MTA has made the CAC meeting minutes available on their website. This increases transparency on both the CAC and MTA."

## **New Business**

- Davis said, "the MTA Commuter Connections show is seeking a CAC member to discuss the benefits of BaltimoreLink, and if interested, to see Judy after the meeting."
- Judy Bellamy announced that on Tuesday, August 15<sup>th</sup>, the CAC will tour the Metro Maintenance Facility, from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. at 5801 Wabash Avenue in Baltimore. More details will follow.
- Davis suggested opening up our meeting more to the broader public, starting with an annual meeting at night to invite comments from people who may not be able to attend during the day.
- CAC members were invited to attend meetings this week at the War Memorial Building and Union Baptist Church to hear public discussion and comments on BaltimoreLink.

## **Meeting Adjourns**

The next CAC meeting will be on August 15<sup>th</sup> at 1 p.m. (TOUR)

The meeting was adjourned at 2:08 p.m.